from the group consisting of routers, switches, firewalls, authentication servers, web hosts, proxy servers, netflow servers, databases, mail servers, RADIUS servers, and domain name servers, the gatherers being positioned on a segment of the network on which the network devices coupled thereto are positioned for minimizing an impact of the gatherers on the network;

- (b) translating the network communications usage information collected from the network devices utilizing the information source modules;
- (c) caching the network communications usage information collected from the network devices utilizing the gatherers;
- (d) normalizing the network communications usage information with the gatherers by excluding fields not required by a central event manager coupled to the gatherers;
- (e) defining an enhancement procedure utilizing the central event manager;
- (f) coordinating the collection of the network communications usage information by the gatherers utilizing the central event manager;
- (g) filtering the network communications asage information utilizing the central event manager;
- (h) completing a plurality of data records from the filtered network communications usage information, the plurality of data records corresponding to network usage by a plurality of users;
- (i) aggregating the network communications usage information and the data records utilizing the central event manager for reducing a number of the data records;
- enhancing the aggregation with the gatherers in accordance with the defined enhancement procedure;
- (k) time stamping the data records at a user-specified interval;
- (l) storing the time stamped data records in tables in a central database coupled to the central event manager at a user-specified interval;
- (m) deleting the stored data records upon the cessation of a predetermined amount of time after the storage utilizing the timestamp;
- (n) continuously monitoring a state of the gatherers;
- (o) detecting a fault; and
- (p) / utilizing the state of the gatherers and the stored data records to recover from the fault upon the detection thereof.